

September 1997

Dear Ralston Families,

We hope the information contained in this handbook will help orient you to the '97-'98 school year and will answer any questions you may have about Ralston life.

We encourage you to become involved in Ralston activities by participating in the PTA meetings which are held monthly in the Ralston Library. Throughout the school year you will receive a monthly PTA publication, RamTracks, that will help keep you up-to-date on PTA meetings, parent education programs, and other activities at school.

We hope this year will be challenging and rewarding for your student. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Very truly yours,

Anne E. Campbell
Principal

Chris Fishel
PTA President

AEC:am

STUDENT ACADEMICS

REQUIRED MATERIALS

All students are expected to arrive in class with the following materials:

- Sturdy 3-ring binder with dividers for each class
- Binder Reminder
- Binder paper
- Pencils and pens
- Textbooks
- Notebooks as required

If a student is financially unable to obtain these materials, the office should be notified and suitable arrangements will be made.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks are distributed at the beginning of the school year. Each student is responsible for the care of issued textbooks and is expected to pay for lost books. Payment for damaged textbooks will be assessed on a prorated basis. **ALL TEXTBOOKS MUST BE COVERED.** If a textbook cover wears out, it should be replaced. A student should be sure his name appears in the front of all assigned textbooks.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important extension of the school's instructional program. Students should plan to spend at least 1 - 1 1/2 hours per night on homework or about 20 to 30 minutes per academic subject. Homework is usually assigned Monday through Thursday.

When a student is absent three days or less, a homework buddy from each class should be contacted to obtain homework assignments. Homework turned in late due to an excused absence is accepted at a rate of one day late for each day of absence.

If a student will be absent for more than three (3) days, parents may call the office to request homework. Assignments may be picked-up in the office twenty-four hours after the initial request. Once the teacher prepares homework assignments for an absent student, the student is expected to complete the assignments.

REPORT CARDS AND WARNING NOTICES

Ralston students receive trimester report cards in the mail. Grades are based on an A through F evaluation scale.

If a student is in danger of receiving a D or F, the teacher will issue a warning (cinch) notice to be mailed home. Most warning notices are issued at the trimester's mid-point; however, they may be issued any time a teacher wishes to communicate a student's academic progress to parents.

HONOR ROLL AND PRINCIPAL'S LIST

If a student has a grade point average of 3.5 or above in achievement and has all "satisfactory" marks for conduct, the student qualifies for the Honor Roll. If a student has a 4.0 average and all "satisfactory" conduct marks, the student qualifies for the Principal's List. Both the Honor Roll and the Principal's List are posted shortly after report cards have been issued.

In computing grade point averages, the following values are used:

A = 4 points

B = 3 points

C = 2 points

D = 1 point

Students who have received unsatisfactory behavior codes will not be eligible for the Honor Roll or Principal's List.

PARENT CONFERENCES

All Ralston teachers are available to conference with parents by appointment. To contact a teacher, please call the school office at 637-4880. On Friday, November 7, and Monday, November 10, Ralston will hold formal parent conferences for all interested parents from 8:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M. Please watch for specific details in October.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students are expected to change clothes for participation in P.E. activities. Students wear shorts and a T-shirt or sweats, socks, and tennis shoes. A uniform may be purchased from the P.E. department. Students who do not dress for P.E. may not participate in the day's activities and their grade will be penalized.

Students are required to participate in all P.E. activities unless a medical note is received from a parent or doctor. If a medical excuse will exceed three days, the student may be asked to complete a written P.E. assignment in the library.

Students should place a combination lock on their P.E. lockers to safeguard personal effects and valuables. **THE SCHOOL WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ITEMS THAT ARE NOT PROPERLY SECURED IN A LOCKER WITH A COMBINATION LOCK.**

ATTENDANCE

ABSENCE

When a student is absent, the parent should call the school on the first day of absence. Please use the VOICE MAIL number, 261-6753. If parents do not notify the school of a student's absence, an office staff member will call home or work in most cases to verify the nature and length of the absence. In the event the absence cannot be verified by phone, the student must present a note to the office upon returning to school.

LATE ARRIVAL

A student must check in with the office when arriving at school after the morning bell. A note from the parent explaining the reason the student is late should be furnished.

EARLY DISMISSAL

When a student has to leave school before regular dismissal time for an appointment (dental, doctor, trip, etc.) the student should bring a note to the office before school starts stating the reason and time of departure.

FAMILY TRIPS DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR

If a student must be away from school on a trip for three days or longer, an Independent Study Form must be completed. At least two days before departing, the student should pick up an Independent Study Form from the office and take it around to all teachers for assignments to complete. The parent and school principal must sign the form and a copy should be left with the office. When the trip is completed, the student should turn in all assigned work.

MAKE-UP WORK

It is the student's responsibility to find out about all work missed during an absence and to make up the work within the time allowed.

If a student is absent for three days or less, a homework buddy should be contacted for assignments. Homework turned in late due to an excused absence is accepted at a rate of one day late for each day of absence.

If a student is absent for more than three days, parents may call the office to request homework. Assignments may be picked-up in the office twenty-four hours after the initial request.

When a student returns to school from any absence, he or she should check with teachers to be certain that all work has been obtained and made up.

TARDINESS

Ralston students are expected to be on time to all classes. If a student is tardy, detention will be assigned by the classroom teacher. If a student persists in being tardy, a disciplinary referral will be made to the office.

DISCIPLINE GUIDELINES

SCHOOL BOARD POLICY

The Discipline Policy of the Belmont School District Board of Trustees is intended to improve the effectiveness of the school program by guiding students to develop patterns of responsible behavior, protecting the learning opportunities of the majority, and providing help for those students with learning or behavior problems.

ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR WEAPONS

Ralston School will not tolerate the possession of weapons on campus at any time by any student. California law requires that a student who brings a weapon (knife, gun, explosive, or other dangerous object) to school must be recommended for expulsion to the Board of Education. The police will also be contacted and appropriate criminal charges will be filed. Weapons have NO place on a school campus; they will NOT BE TOLERATED.

BASIC EXPECTATIONS

A Ralston student is expected to treat all other students and staff with respect and to behave so that the educational process can take place without disruption.

Every Ralston student is expected to respect authority. Ralston students must conform to school rules and regulations and to state and local laws that apply to the conduct of juveniles and minors. This includes while students are on school grounds, going to or coming from school, during the lunch period, and during, or while going to or coming from, a school-sponsored activity. (Education Code .48900)

DETENTION

Detention will be from 3:10 - 4:00 P.M.

Tardiness or failure to appear will result in added detentions.

Inappropriate behavior in detention will result in Activities Probation and/or added detentions.

Following three detentions, students will be considered for O/R placement, suspension and/or Activities Probation.

ACTIVITIES PROBATION

Students on Activities Probation are not allowed to participate in the following: sports, cheerleading, selected assemblies, field trips, dances, and special events.

Activities Probation lasts for four (4) weeks.

Any student who is suspended from school will be placed on Activities Probation for three weeks.

Any student with a grade point average below 1.5 will be placed on Activities Probation.

BUS RULES

Using the bus is a privilege. When riding SamTrans buses or school field trip buses, students must not engage in behavior that is unsafe, distracting, or disruptive.

When violation of safety and unacceptable behavior occur on a SamTrans bus, the students will be reported to school authorities, and the following actions will occur:

1. First offense - Exclusion from SamTrans to and from school for one week.
2. Second offense - Exclusion from SamTrans to and from school for one month.
3. Third offense - Exclusion from SamTrans for the remainder of the school year.

Misbehavior during a field trip will result in exclusion from all field trips for the remainder of the year.

SUSPENSION

Students are subject to off-campus suspension when they commit serious infractions of the behavior code. When a student is suspended from school the student must remain away from the Ralston campus and may not attend school activities for the duration of the suspension.

GENERAL INFORMATION

LUNCH PROCEDURES

All students have a 45-minute lunch break during the middle of the day. Students must remain on campus during lunch. Milk is available for purchase and information will be sent home the first week of school about purchasing procedures.

Ice cream is sold by PTA volunteers on Tuesday and Thursday of each week. The PTA also sponsors "Hot Food Days" on Tuesday and Thursday. Students can purchase pizza or tacos and soda. Students should listen to the Daily Bulletin for details about "Hot Food Days."

LOCKERS

Students are assigned lockers at the beginning of the school year. Lockers are issued to students as a convenience by the school. **THE SCHOOL IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY THEFT OR VANDALISM THAT MAY OCCUR. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING GOOD CARE OF THEIR LOCKERS AND KEEPING THEM CLEAN.** Students must supply combination locks for their lockers. Key-operated locks are not permitted. Combination locks are available for purchase in the school office or may be brought from home. Any locker problems should be reported to the homeroom teacher.

Lockers are subject to inspection at any time.

TELEPHONE USE

Two public telephones are available for student use before school, at lunch, and after school. To be prepared for unforeseen emergencies, students should always have money on hand for a local call. The office phone is only available for student use in school-related emergency situations.

MEDICATION

If it is necessary to bring medicine to school, a student should leave it in the office. When it is time to take the medication, a student should get a pass from the teacher and report to the office.

VISITORS

All visitors must check in at the office upon arrival at school. Students from other schools are not allowed on campus during the school day; this especially applies to house guests or visiting relatives.

BUS PROCEDURES

Many Ralston students use SamTrans to travel to school. Monthly student passes can be purchased for \$18.00/month; individual fares are 50 cents for students who choose not to purchase a pass.

Riding the bus is a privilege and students are expected to observe the following rules:

- Line up, enter and leave the bus in an orderly manner.
- Remain seated while riding the bus.
- Speak in a conversational tone, without profanity and excessive noise.
- Do not deface or damage the bus.
- Do not eat or drink on the bus.

Violators will receive bus citations and may lose bus-riding privileges.

COUNSELING

The guidance and counseling program is an important facet of the middle school program as students grow from a self-contained program in elementary schools to a more independent departmental one in middle school. Ralston's assistant principal is available to assist students, parents and teachers in resolving academic, personal, and social problems. Please feel free to contact him at 637-4880.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

The Ralston Student Council is the governing body of all student activities. The Student Council coordinates the efforts of student committees and service groups. Members of the Student Council include grade level officers and representative elected from each home room. Seventh and eighth grade student body officers are elected in the spring of the previous school year; sixth grade officers are elected in the fall.

AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS

The After-School Sports Program offers both boys and girls a complete year-long program in a variety of sports. Students interested in playing on a team should listen for details in the student bulletin or should ask a P.E. teacher.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES REQUIRE GOOD GRADES

To participate in extra-curricular activities, a student must maintain good grades. Both academic grades and conduct grades must be satisfactory. A student must have a G.P.A. of at least 2.0

in the quarter prior to the one in which the activity is to occur and conduct grades must at least be "satisfactory." Students remain eligible only if they maintain at least a 2.0 G.P.A. and at least "satisfactory" conduct grades in all classes.

Activities affected by this policy include:

- After-School Sports
- Cheerleaders
- Student Body Officers
- Student Council Representatives
- Jazz Band Members
- Participation in Drama Productions.

BLOCK 'R' AWARD

Students gain membership in Block R through participation and accomplishments in academics, service and athletics. Students are presented with a large letter "R" in recognition of their achievements. A student must accumulate a total of 120 points to earn a Block R. A star will be awarded for each additional 100 points earned.

RALSTON DANCES

The Student Council sponsors dances throughout the school year. The following guidelines apply:

- Dances are held in the multi-purpose room from 7:00 - 9:00 P.M.
- Students should not arrive for a dance before 6:45 P.M.
- Students must arrive by 7:15 P.M. or they will not be admitted
- Dance tickets are sold from the ice cream window the week of the dance.
- Non-Ralston students may not attend Ralston dances.
- O/R students may not attend Ralston dances while in O/R.
- Students on Activities Probation may not attend Ralston dances.
- If a student is absent from school the day of the dance, he or she may not attend the dance.
- If a student violates dance rules, parents will be contacted and the student will be sent home. The student may not be allowed to attend future dances.
- All students must leave campus by 9:15 P.M. Students who are not picked up by 9:15 P.M. will not be allowed to attend the next dance.
- Parent and faculty chaperones will always be present.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Should an emergency situation (such as an earthquake, power failure, or civil disaster) occur while school is in session, Ralston's response plan will be as follows:

- No student will be dismissed from school unless a parent (or individual previously designated by a parent) comes for him/her.
- No student will be allowed to leave with another person even a relative or baby-sitter, unless that person is listed on the student's emergency form. PLEASE BE SURE YOUR CHILD'S EMERGENCY CARD IS UP-TO-DATE.

If an emergency situation should exist, we ask that you observe the following guidelines:

- Please DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL. We must have the lines open for emergency calls.
- As soon as possible, come to school to pick-up your student and any other students for whom you are the emergency card designee.
- Park on the streets. Leave the driveway and parking areas clear for emergency vehicles.
- If, at the direction of public officials (fire, police, etc.) Ralston students have been relocated to another site for safety, announcements will be made on Bay Area radio and T.V. stations. A Public Information line will also be maintained at the District Office, 637-4800, and the PTA will initiate a telephone tree.
- Be sure you have told your student to follow the directions of school personnel.

For your information, we have a complete Emergency Response Plan available in our office. You are welcome to come in and review it at any time.

PARENT RESOURCE GUIDE

1. Carlmont Center for Family Counseling
1607 Industrial Way, Belmont, CA
591-9623
2. Jewish Family & Children's Services
490 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA
591-8991
3. Catholic Charities
600 Columbia Drive, San Mateo, CA
579-0277
4. Peninsula Family Resource Center
307 2nd Avenue, San Mateo, CA
696-1255
5. Child Care Coordinating Council
1838 El Camino Real, Burlingame, CA
696-8787
6. Children's Protective Services
400 Harbor Blvd., Belmont, CA
595-7922
7. Suicide Prevention & Crisis Center
1811 Trousdale Drive, Burlingame, CA
368-6655
8. Teen Helpline/24 hour calls
1-800-877-7675
9. Parental Stress Hotline
327-3333

STAFF LIST

ADMINISTRATION

Lawrence Glendinning, Principal

FACULTY

Marchetti, Chris
Dean
Ausley, Denise
Barile, Joe
Boyarsky, Jane
Bradley, Michael
Chimera, Jan
Cicero, Dodie
Codianne, Mary
Colt, Greg
Constant, LeeAnn
Cooper, Robin
Creager, Jane
Cruze, Lennie
Da Baldo, John
Federighi, Rick
Giambruno, Susan
Goodrich, Lorraine
Hanlon, Dorothy
Jines, Sunee
Jorgensen, Mark
Kikuchi, Brenda
Masters, John
Means, Gary
Metheany, Randy
Miller, Eve
Morey, Doris
Mulroe, Sheri
Paoli, Pam
Pomeroy, Steve
Rosas, Abe
Sheldon, Patricia
Shulenberger, Jon
Starkey, Phoebe
Taylor, Caryl
Wittig, Judy
Yager, Bryan
Zahnow, Gene

SUPPORT STAFF

Armstrong, Betsy
RSP Aide
Edwards, Andre
Head Custodian
Fillipone, Robert
Night Custodian
Iuppa, Ginny
Science Aide
Lloyd, Carol
School Secretary
Mira, Willy
Custodian
Mutto, Audrey
School Secretary
Shameson, Clara
English Aide
Wodarczyk, Pat
Library Technician

PTA OFFICERS

President	Chris Fishel
First Vice President	Mary Lenigk
Second Vice President	Wilma Reiber
Secretary	Nan Harrington
Treasurer	Chela Stoklosa
Auditor	Susan Whited
Historian	Gina Bojarski
Parliamentarian	Linda Clark

1997-98 PTA COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Adopt-A-School/Entertainment Books	Linda Townsend
Assemblies	Karen Boundy
Back-To-School Packet	Nan Harrington
	Nancy Gisko
Binder Reminder	Ginny Sheehan
Career Day	Nan Harrington
	Denise Shackleton
Dance Chaperones	Kelly McGrath
Directory	Gloria Fishel
Hospitality/Main Events/ Monthly Treats	Mary Wong
Hot Food Sales	
Tacos	Tia Jenson
Pizza	Carolyn Miller
Nob Hill	Lisa Palm
	Sharon Loui
Ice Cream	Shirley Sharples
Membership	Donna Benner
	Patty Wilson
RamTracks	
Editor	K.C. Eisner
Distribution	Linda Murphy
Red Ribbon Week	Maryanne Leontiades
	June Lombardi
Reflections	Debbie Crandall
Site Council Liaison	Lexann Massoni
Spring Fling	Kelly McGrath
Teacher Appreciation	Sharon Thompson
	Ellen Maiman
Volunteer Coordinator	Nancy Gisko
Web Page Liaison	Kerin Garrett
Wish List	Linda Murphy

1997-98 SCHOOL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

3

SCHOOL OPENS

OCTOBER

6

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

NOVEMBER

7

PARENT CONFERENCES - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

10

PARENT CONFERENCES - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

11

VETERAN'S DAY

21

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

27-28

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAYS

DECEMBER

19

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR 1997

JANUARY

5

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY - NO SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS

6

SCHOOL REOPENS FOR STUDENTS

19

MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY

FEBRUARY

13

LINCOLN'S HOLIDAY

16

WASHINGTON'S HOLIDAY

APRIL

6-10

SPRING VACATION

MAY

1

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

25

MEMORIAL HOLIDAY

JUNE

10

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL FOR STUDENTS